



FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UPDATE ON 2009 H1N1 FLU AND VACCINE

DECEMBER 17, 2009

Influenza Illness is Decreasing

Incidence of influenza like-illness has been decreasing across the United States for several weeks, indicating the second wave of the H1N1 outbreak has peaked, but still remains above baseline levels. Previous pandemics have occurred in similar waves and it is possible that a third wave of either seasonal or H1N1 could come later in the winter, when influenza most often hits hardest. So it is important to encourage vaccination among all employees to prevent or blunt a third outbreak.

Vaccine Supply is Increasing

FOH continues to order and receive weekly allocations of 2009 H1N1 vaccine from CDC. Doses have increased substantially in recent weeks, allowing most sites to begin offering the flu vaccine to Group 3 (general population as defined in our [distribution plan](#)) while continuing to provide vaccine to any remaining individuals in the priority target groups defined by CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

It is important to remember that just as vaccine supplies may vary by state or region, they will also vary by FOH site due to that agency's demographics and local demand. As a result, not every site will be in the same stage in their immunization campaign at the same time. These minor disparities will eventually be mitigated by expected continuous supply. Our overarching goal remains to vaccinate as many people as quickly as possible, so in keeping with ACIP guidelines, supplies will not be held locally to ensure equity across an agency.

Future Supply and Outreaches

Based on projections from manufacturers and the CDC, H1N1 flu vaccine supplies are expected to remain steady in December and increase in January 2010. Staff who normally provide outreach or offsite vaccine programs will begin to schedule these activities as supplies permit. Recognizing local variability, this will likely occur in January and continue until demand is met.

The Federal H1N1 vaccine program is an important supplement to state and local health efforts. We encourage federal employees who wish to be vaccinated, especially those in target groups in remote locations, to seek opportunities in their community that may be available before FOH resources. For more information about H1N1 influenza activity, vaccines, and frequently asked questions, including a flu shot locator, go to www.flu.gov.